7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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342 177 435 [492] construction used thatch or palm leaves carried from hot country. These cost only the price of renting a horse, if it was necessary, for transportation. Roofs made of these materials have to be replaced every seven or eight years. Each rethatching requires three days' work with four or five helpers, and the houseowner must provide a meal for them and their families. He spends about 25 pesos for meat and uses two or three liters of corn; the total cost is about 75 pesos. Another kind of roof is made of wooden shingles bought in the neighboring town. These are fixed to the housetops with wooden pegs, and the total cost is about 200 pesos. This lasts ten or twelve years with replacement of individual shingles. Tile roofs have the highest initial cost, 800 pesos, but the lowest maintenance in labor.

342 435

TABLE 13. Construction Costs for House, 1965

	Cost (pesos)
Supplies	
Roof tiles (1,000)	800
Posts and poles	*
Planks	40
Door	100
Window frame	30
Services	
Transportation of tiles	30
Transportation of posts and poles	206
Carpenter	50
Food for helpers	75
TOTAL	1,331

* Obtained free from communal woods.

342 House walls are preferably made of mud mixed with lime poured into an interlacing of cane poles set between the house posts and tied with a handmade fiber rope. Another temporary type of construction, which does not offer as good insulation, is made of board planks. Sweatbaths are 343 made by digging out a floor about 2.5 meters square, raising stones in an [514] oval shape over this, and plastering them with mud. The I.N.I. tried to in- [647] troduce latrines, but no more than a half dozen of the cement toilet seats [177] they gave away as demonstrators were put into use. Latrines are consid- [231] ered to be dirty since the pigs and dogs cannot scavenge the feces.

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The townspeople feel that they own the church, and many resent the intrusion of the priest who resides sometimes two or three days a week in the adjoining rectory. In the past five years, however, the priest has succeeded in asserting more control over the church: he has forbidden drinking in the church or in the courtyard, a prohibition that resulted in an open confrontation with the leading cofrade (Chapter 9); and he now controls the keys to the church and to the money boxes, formerly the responsibility of the fiscal. The two lay sisters who are in residence during the week hold the keys and are in charge of the upkeep of the church.

People always show respect for the church by removing their hats as they pass the entrance, even when they are at a distance. As they enter the church, they always kneel and cross themselves. They may spit on the floor of the church, for this is not a sign of disrespect.

The complementarity of church and cabildo is still formally recognized in ceremonial events: participants bow to the church and then to the cabildo during processions. The transfer of sacred symbols from one locale to the other at the time of the inauguration of civil and religious officials ceremonially signifies the integration of civil and religious authority, despite the growing separation in day-to-day functions in each of the domains.

The church serves as a staging platform for the images and symbolic offerings to them in the annual cycle of ceremonies. During the nine days of ceremony accorded to the major saints, their images are moved to the center of the altar or to the center of the nave. The staging effects are particularly notable during the fiesta of Holy Week, when the reenactment of the crucifixion is performed in the nave. The mayordomos, under the direction of the fiscal and the lay sisters, move the saints about and prepare adornments of flowers and pine needles.

The church is the locus for the weekly mass given by the priest. The men stand on the left side of the church (facing the altar), while the women kneel or sit on the floor to the right. A few benches near the altar are occupied by the Ladinos of the area who attend the mass. The lay sisters indicate to the congregation when they should kneel and rise in response to the cues of the sermon or mass.

In addition to these scheduled events, the church serves as a locus where

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informants cannot, fortunately, be relegated to the role of rats in the maze of their own cultural settings, I prefer the actor's to the investigator's statement of significantly contrasting units. I have found it useful, however, to retain both modes of analysis. Observation corrects for the shorthand statements of the informant, for his lapses of memory, or for inadequate knowledge. Even if some of these inadequacies are corrected by other informants, there remains the problem as to what is an individual understanding and what is socially shared knowledge. In addition, observation provides cues to the dynamic variables which enter into all social processes. 121 124

It is impossible, if not irrelevant, to recount all the behavior occurring in an event. Some of the selection will be fortuitous: we will record what aspects we observe. But not all of this need be included. For example, one would exclude the trips to the back of the patio to urinate by participants in a household ritual, but what might well be recorded is the etiquette with which they undertake these trips. In Tzo?ontahal, people carefully excuse themselves, saying, "I go before your face," specifying that they must urinate. Discretion requires explicitness rather than reticence in reference to such urges, perhaps because of the paranoic fears, particularly during curing ritual, that the one who is departing may be using counter-healing magic when he leaves the group. 121 514 [196] [152] [154]

There is no absolute rule to guide one in selection. In my own field notes, I note what is significant in terms of my own comprehension of goals being pursued. Having been cued into most of the activity in sessions with the informants prior to the event, I have 121 124

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